

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

NIC-01 RSR-01 /085 W

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R 160920 Z APR 73

FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1414

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT, SCUL, GR

SUBJECT: IAKOVOS VISIT TO THESSALONIKI

REF: THESSALONIKI'S 0224 AND 0222

1. IN ONLY PRESS COMMENTARY ON IAKOVOS VISIT OVER WEEKEND, ELLINIKOS VORRAS' ARCH- CONSERVATIVE CHIEF EDITOR ELIAS KYROU TOOK NOTE OF ARCHBISHOP'S STATEMENT OF NEED FOR ALL ELEMENTS OF CHURCH TO BACK ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE (REFTEL 224). IN " OUR OPINION" COLUMN APRIL 14 KYROU TOOK PRESENT LEADERSHIP OF CHURCH OF GREECE TO TASK FOR PAST FAILURE TO DO SO, THEREBY " IMPAIRING ITS (PATRIARCHATE'S) PRIVILEGES" AND " DAMAGING ITS PRESTIGE".

2. COMMENT: IN GENERAL, ARCHBISHOP'S VISIT TO THESSALONIKI FELL SOMEWHAT SHORT OF RESOUNDING SUCCESS. APART FROM HIS POOR RECEPTION AT THE STUDENT CONGRESS (REFTEL 222), IT WAS CLEAR THAT HIS APRIL 12 LUNCHEON, AT WHICH ONLY ONE MINOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL PRESENT, WAS HASTILY IMPROVISED BY HIS OWN PARTY TO FILL UNANTICIPATED GAP IN PROGRAM. SIMILARLY HIS LECTURE AT UNIVERSITY THAT EVENING WAS POORLY ATTENDED BY RANKING GOVERNMENT, MILITARY AND UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES, WITH MANY CHAIRS MARKED FOR LEADING PERSONALITIES, PARTICULARLY

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AMONG THE MILITARY, CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT.(SPEECH, WHICH BORE DOWN HARD ON CONDITIONS IN US, STUDDED WITH ERUDITE AND ESOTERIC REFERENCES OBVIOUSLY OVER HEADS OF MANY IN AUDIENCE, EXCLUDING AVANT GARDE GROUP OF YOUNGER PROFESSORS WHO WELL REPRESENTED.) RECTOR SKRAKAS' PROMISE OF SOME FUTURE HONORARY DOCTORATE FOR ARCHBISHOP FROM SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY WAS APPARENTLY LAST- MINUTE GESTURE AND DID LITTLE TO RETRIEVE SITUATION (WE HAD UNDERSTOOD IN FACT THAT SOME SUCH HONOR WAS TO BE CONFERRED DURING THIS VISIT.)

3. WHETHER THIS WAS DELIBERATE SNUB ON PART OF HOSTS, DUE TO ARCHBISHOP' S STANDS WITH REGARD TO CHURCH OF GREECE AND PATRIARCHATE AND OTHER ISSUES, OR SIMPLY RESULT OF POOR ADVANCE PLANNING ON EITHER SIDE IS NOT CLEAR. HOWEVER BY NEXT MORNING DECISION EVIDENTLY TAKEN TO PUT BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON SITUATION AND, AFTER VISITS TO VLATADON MONASTERY AND PATRISTIC STUDIES INSTITUTE (BOTH UNDER PATRIARCHAL AEGIS) AND TO AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL, LUNCHEON HOSTED BY METROPOLITAN LEONIDAS WITH GOVERNOR ANASTASOPOULOS PRESENT WAS HEARTY, CONVIVIAL AFFAIR. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE, ARCHBISHOP DROPPED EARLIER MOOD OF PREOCCUPATION AND CONCERN, AND EVEN OBSERVED HOW WARMTH OF PERSONAL CONTACTS IN THESSALONIKI CONTRASTED WITH GENERALLY COLD, IMPERSONAL RECEPTION IN CAPITAL.
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